

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6342

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

COMIDEASTFOR

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 4614

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, KU, IZ, BA

SUBJ: COMIDEASTFOR'S MEETING WITH KUWAIT'S DEFENSE MINISTER

REF: KUWAIT 4612

1. RADM CROWE, COMMANDER, MIDDLE EAST FORCE, ACCOMPANIED BY
AMBASSADOR, CALLED ON GOK DEFENSE MINISTER SHAIKH SA'AD AL
ABDULLA AL-SABAH ON SEPTEMBER 29. AFTER A DESCRIPTION OF
MIDEASTFOR'S TRAINING ROLE, (BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL), DISCUSSION
TURNED TO SECURITY SITUATION IN PERSIAN GULF AREA.

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2. SHAIKH SA'AD REPORTED THERE WAS NO FURTHER MOVEMENT IN

KUWAIT'S BORDER DISPUTE WITH IRAQ. GOK WAS PURSUING EFFORTS IN DIPLOMATIC CHANNEL, BUT THERE HAD BEEN NO PROGRESS REGISTERED THERE YET. ACCORDING TO KUWAITI AMBASSADOR TO IRAQ, IRAQ FONMIN SAID THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS QUESTION WITH GOK FONMIN SHAIKH SABAH AL-AHMAD IN NEW YORK DURING UNGA. HOWEVER, IRAQI FONMIN HAD NOT YET DEPARTED FOR NEW YORK. SHAIKH SA'AD CONFIRMED CONNECTION OF BORDER DISPUTE WITH IRAQ'S DEMAND FOR CESSION OF BUBIYAN ISLAND AS EXPLAINED BY MFA UNDERSECRETARY RASHID AL-RASHID IN REFTEL. SHAIKH SA'AD STATED THAT IRAQ SOUGHT TO OBTAIN HALF OF BUBIYAN ISLAND ALONG SHIP CHANNEL NEAR UMM QASR AND FRONTING ON AL-FAO, IMPORTANT IRAQI PORTS ON GULF. HE CLAIMED THAT IRAQIS INTENDED TO BUILD A NAVAL BASE ON BUBIYAN ISLAND AND ASSUMED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE THE HELP OF THE SOVIET UNION IN ITS CONSTRUCTION, IF KUWAIT WERE TO CEDE SUCH TERRITORY.

3. IN THIS CONTEXT, ADMIRAL CROWE NOTED THAT, BESIDES PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING THROUGH VISITS AND TRAINING, HE WAS CONVINCED THAT MIDDLE EAST FORCE CONTRIBUTED TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE GULF. SHAIKH SA'AD AGREED AND SAID THAT KUWAIT HAD NO PROBLEM WITH U.S. NAVY PRESENCE IN GULF AT BAHRAIN. HE NOTED THAT SOVIET NAVY PLIED GULF QUITE FREQUENTLY ON WAY TO IRAQ. ADMIRAL CONFIRMED THIS, REPORTING THAT SOVIET DESTROYER OF KASHIN CLASS WAS CITED DURING HIS TRIP FROM BAHRAIN TO KUWAIT ON USS CAPODANNO. HE ALSO HAD REPORTS THAT FOUR MORE SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS WOULD BE TRANSITING GULF SOON ON THEIR WAY TO BASRA.

4. AMBASSADOR REMARKED THAT MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN GULF WOULD NOT BE OF LONG DURATION SINCE BAHRAIN WAS REQUIRING ITS DEPARTURE BY JUNE 1977. SHAIKH SA'AD QUERIED WHETHER THIS WAS DEFINITE AND, WHEN TOLD BY ADMIRAL CROWE THAT HE WAS PROCEEDING ON THIS BASIS, SUGGESTED THAT GOB MIGHT RECONSIDER THIS DECISION.

5. MEETING CONCLUDED WITH ADMIRAL CROWE EXPRESSING HIS THANKS TO DEFENSE MINISTER FOR EXCELLENT MOD COOPERATION DURING VISIT OF USS CAPODANNO. SHEIKH SA'AD RESPONDED THAT VISIT WAS MOST WELCOME AND THAT US NAVY COULD

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COME QUOTE ANY TIME UNQUOTE TO KUWAIT.

6. COMMENT: SIMILARLY TO PREVIOUS MEETING WITH RASHID AL-RASHID REPORTED REFTEL, SHAIKH SA-AD CONFIRMED THAT GOK SAW NO OBJECTION TO CONTINUED PRESENCE OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN GULF AND, INDEED, SEEMED TO WELCOME IT. MAESTRONE

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